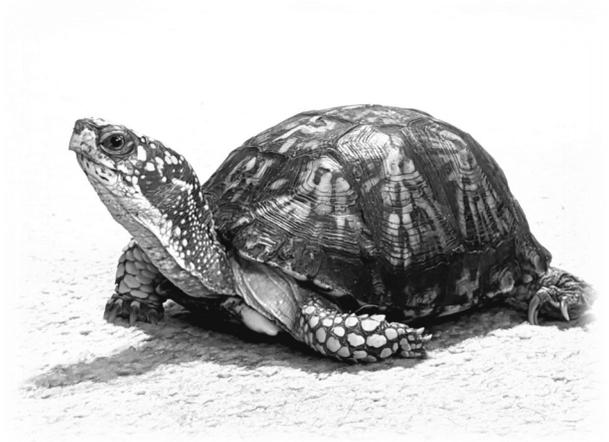


Claytor Lake State Park

Reptiles and Amphibians of Claytor Lake State Park



Reptiles and Amphibians are an integral part of the large and varied ecosystem that is Claytor Lake State Park. Reptiles and Amphibians are found all over the park, from the ridgetops to the lake itself. These fascinating animals are diverse and fun to observe.

While you are out enjoying the park, please be respectful of the wildlife you see. Please don't harass or feed the animals. Enjoy them in their natural habitat.

If you would like more information about the reptiles and amphibians in Claytor Lake State Park you might try some of these resources:

- Ask a member of the park Nature Staff.
- Look in a field guide. The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources has an excellent guide series for the snakes, amphibians and turtles of Virginia. <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/>
- Check out the website for the Virginia Herpetological Society. Lots of good information and identification aids there. <https://virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com>

Where and when can you spot reptiles and amphibians?

The park has six trails - a total of 7 miles of hike or bike trails that provide an excellent opportunity to observe wildlife either on or along the trail or in the distance.

Road surfaces are a great area to watch for wildlife. Many animals are attracted to roads to take advantage of absorbing the heat on cooler nights or just simply crossing.

Depending on the season and time of day, activity varies. Amphibians and reptiles are ectotherms that control their body temperature through external sources such as basking in the sun to warm up. Species are less active during periods of extreme cold or heat.



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Claytor Lake State Park
6620 Ben H Bolen Drive
Dublin, VA 24084
Phone 540-643-2500



Reptiles are cold blooded animals which have dry, scaly skin. They either lay leathery-shelled eggs on land or bear live young. They include the snakes, lizards and turtles found at Claytor Lake State Park.

These are some of the more common reptiles you may see here at the park.

Snakes:

- Northern Copperhead**
- Timber Rattlesnake**
- Eastern Wormsnake**
- Northern Black Racer**
- Northern Ring-Necked Snake**
- Eastern Hog-nosed Snake**
- Eastern Milk Snake**
- Northern Watersnake**
- Eastern Ratsnake**
- Queensnake**
- DeKay's Brownsnake**
- Eastern Gartersnake**

Lizards:

- Common Five-Lined Skink**
- Eastern Fence Lizard**

Turtles:

- Snapping Turtle**
- Eastern Painted Turtle**
- Eastern Musk Turtle**
- Woodland Box Turtle**



Amphibians are also cold blooded, but have moist skin. They lay their eggs in water and include frogs, toads and salamanders.

Here is a list of amphibians often seen here in the park:

Frogs and Toads:

- Eastern American Toad**
- Fowler's Toad**
- Gray Treefrog**
- American Bullfrog**
- Green Frog**
- Pickerel Frog**
- Wood Frog**
- Spring Peeper**

Salamanders:

- Jefferson Salamander**
- Spotted Salamander**
- Marbled Salamander**
- Southern Two-Lined Salamander**
- Eastern Long-Tailed Salamander**
- Four-Toed Salamander**
- Red Spotted Newt**
- Eastern Red-Backed Salamander**
- White Spotted Slimy Salamander**